

WHITE HOUSE PHYSICIAN
& GENERAL HEALTH

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WHITE HOUSE

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Abraham Lincoln's White House

White House Physician & Health

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Mr. Lincoln stands the excitement of the times much better than was expected. He has a good deal of physical stamina, and will go through the war unharmed so far as his health is concerned. A letter says "He is eccentric, but possesses more grit than either Harrison or Taylor." Taylor was a trump on the battle-field, but in the council chamber his weakness became apparent. He could not endure that peculiar care and excitement which falls to the lot of any man who is President of the United States."

STILL
BOSTON

NEW RECORD OF LINCOLN'S LIFE IS DISCOVERED

Personal Physician Was Southern Sympathizer.

New York.—[U.P.]—New historical facts about Abraham Lincoln have just come to light through the enterprise of Margaret Deland, who discovered that the wife of Lincoln's family physician, Dr. Robert Stone, had a considerable store of personal reminiscences which had never before been recorded. Mrs. Deland has begun the recording of these reminiscences in an article published by the Woman's Home Companion.

It is interesting to note that Lincoln's health, during his incumbency of the presidency, was in the hands of a physician who was generally regarded as a southern sympathizer. Dr. Stone's wife was, in fact, a cousin of Robert E. Lee, and it was even gossiped around Washington by southern sympathizers that Lincoln's kindness to Mrs. Stone was "an effort to ingratiate himself with Gen. Lee against the time when Lee should take Washington."

Can't Choose Patients.

The civil war was already under way when Lincoln first sent for Dr. Stone to come to the White House. Mrs. Stone was shocked by the summons. She felt that any connection between her family and Lincoln would be regarded by her confederate friends as a traitorous act against her cousin, Gen. Lee. But her husband decided to go.

"A doctor can't choose his patients," Dr. Stone explained to her. "I don't know why he wants me, because he must know my southern affiliations."

Another guest in the house, a rabid southern sympathizer, urged Dr. Stone to go. "It's the opportunity of your life," this man remarked, "Go and kill him!"

But Lincoln's personality soon won over the hostile family. "My husband loved Lincoln, and couldn't see anything wrong with him, except his man-

ners," writes Mrs. Stone. "Of course the poor man had no manners."

When Lincoln died, the Stones were under suspicion. Mrs. Stone, to overcome that suspicion, bought all the crêpe she could find in the available stores, and covered the entire front of the doctor's house with it. She explained her action by saying: "It was known that I was Gen. Lee's cousin, and people had gone so mad with hate that I thought they might burn our house down."

When soldiers came to get Dr. Stone to go to Lincoln's bedside on the night of the assassination, there was some doubt as to whether the summons was an ordinary professional one, or an arrest with a drumhead court martial in prospect. Mrs. Stone ran down the steps of her house after the soldiers, and screamed at them, "Don't let any harm come to my husband!" Then, when the soldiers paid no attention, she stood weeping on the sidewalk, sobbing, "They will kill him! They will kill my husband, just because I am Lee's cousin! They are beasts, those Yankee soldiers!"

Not Wanted as Spy.

But it turned out that the doctor was not wanted as a spy or traitor, but in hopes that he would be able to alleviate the President's suffering.

The historical importance of Mrs. Deland's new effort is that it shows very clearly Lincoln's broadmindedness and tolerance, in employing as his personal physician a man whose affiliations with the enemy were very close and intimate. Lincoln judged Dr. Stone a man of simple honor, who would never take advantage of his contact with the White House, and when Lincoln reached a judgment of this kind, he invariably stood by it, through thick and thin.

